

MARINE INFORMATION**NEW EDITION OF SAILING DIRECTIONS**

Pub. 123, Sailing Directions (Enroute) Southwest Coast of Africa, Eighth Edition, 2001, is ready for issue. This publication has been corrected to 1 September 2001, including Notice to Mariners No. 35 of 2001.

AMENDMENTS TO THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF SIGNALS

The IMO Maritime Safety Committee, at its seventy-third session (MSC-73/21, paragraph 11.25), adopted amendments to the International Code of Signals which will become effective 1 January 2002. A new signal will be added to the "Single-letter Signals with complements" as follows:

SIGNAL**MEANING**

Z-with one numeral

To call or address shore signal stations (Numeral to be approved by local authority).

The publication of this notice is solely for the purpose of bringing this information to the attention of all United States mariners concerned. A correction to Pub. 102 International Code of Signals for Visual, Sound and Radio Communications, United States Edition 1969 (Revised 1999), will be published in Notice to Mariners 52 of 2001, dated 29 December 2001.

DISCONTINUANCE OF 121.5 AND 243 MHZ FOR SATELLITE DISTRESS ALERTS

The Cospas-Sarsat Program has announced plans to terminate satellite processing of distress signals from 121.5 and 243 MHz emergency beacons. No effective date has been set for this action, however, it is expected to occur far enough into the future to avoid a crisis for mariners, aviators and other users of the system. Users of the system will have to switch to emergency beacons operating at 406 MHz, which are more reliable and provide search and rescue agencies complete information that they need to do their job, in order to be detected by satellites.

Reasons for the Cospas-Sarsat program to discontinue use is driven by guidance from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). These two agencies are responsible for regulating the safety of ships and aircraft on international transits and handle international standards for maritime and aeronautical search and rescue missions. In addition, 121.5 MHz false alerts inundate search and rescue resources which impact the effectiveness of lifesaving services.

Individuals who plan on buying a new distress beacon need to be aware and take the Cospas-Sarsat decision into account. For further information contact United States Coast Guard Headquarters at: Phone (202) 267-1586 or email: psteward@comdt.uscg.mil

GULF OF FINLAND TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME

The Traffic Separation Scheme off Gogland and Somners Island has been amended effective 1 November 2001. The TSS has been implemented by the Russian Federation as an interim measure pending the formal adoption of the amended scheme by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).